



Attorney General Jon Bruning

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Shannon Kingery (402) 471-2067

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AG Bruning Dishes \$425,000 to Nebraska Food Banks

LINCOLN – Attorney General Jon Bruning today announced a gift of \$425,000 in assistance for Nebraska food bank programs. Funds are distributed from a settlement reached with Dannon, Inc. regarding alleged unlawful marketing claims. The multi-state settlement of \$21 million is the largest consumer protection food product settlement to date, with Nebraska receiving \$425,000.

“Many Nebraskans struggle to feed their families every day,” said Bruning. “These programs do more than provide meals – they work to fortify our people and strengthen our communities. I’m proud to help extend those efforts.”

Bruning will distribute the settlement funds to five Nebraska hunger relief programs: Food Bank for the Heartland, Food Bank of Lincoln, Mid-Nebraska Food Bank, Northwest Community Action Program and the Norfolk Salvation Army.

“With more families seeking assistance, our food distribution grew an alarming 35 percent in 2010,” said Susan Ogborn, President/CEO of Food Bank for the Heartland. “This contribution will enable the Food Bank to distribute approximately 675,000 meals to people struggling to put food on the table.”

The recipient agencies provide direct aid to individuals as well as supporting smaller, community food pantries, mobile outreach and backpack programs. Last year, Nebraska food banks provided more than 12 million meals to area families and individuals.

“Census figures show that in our service area we have had a 32% increase in people living below the poverty line over the last two years,” said Scott Young, Executive Director of the Food Bank of Lincoln. “We have over 14,000 kids under the age of 18 in our service area who need our help. This gift will impact the lives of thousands of southeast Nebraskans.”

RECIPIENTS:

Food Bank for the Heartland (Omaha) - \$225,000

The non-profit organization serves more than 300 food pantries, emergency shelters, after-school programs, senior housing sites and rehabilitation centers in the area. It is the largest food bank in Nebraska and Iowa, encompassing 93 counties in the two-state region.

Nearly 22,000 different individuals in Food Bank for the Heartland's service area receive emergency food assistance in any given week.

Food Bank of Lincoln - \$115,000

The program serves 16 southeast Nebraska counties including: Butler, Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Johnson, Lancaster, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Polk, Richardson, Saline, Saunders, Seward, Thayer and York.

In 2010, the Food Bank of Lincoln distributed over 8 million pounds of food – the equivalent of more than 17,000 meals per day. It is estimated that the Food Bank and its member agencies serve 8,100 different individuals each week.

Mid-Nebraska Food Bank (Kearney) - \$45,000

The Mid-Nebraska Food Bank covers 31 counties in central and western Nebraska and distributes nearly 450,000 pounds of food a year. Counties served include: Adams, Brown, Buffalo, Chase, Clay, Custer, Dawson, Dundy, Franklin, Frontier, Furnas, Garfield, Gosper, Hall, Hamilton, Harlan, Hitchcock, Howard, Kearney, Keith, Lincoln, Merrick Norton, Nuckolls, Perkins, Phelps, Phillips, Red Willow, Sherman, Valley and Webster.

The Mid-Nebraska Food Bank serves two types of charities: Emergency Food Pantries, where people needing assistance can pick up food for their own use and organizations that serve meals on site.

Northwest Community Action Partnership (Alliance location) - \$20,000

Northwest Community Action Partnership is a community benefit agency formed in 1965. The agency is one of the nine Community Action Agencies in Nebraska and provides services in Box Butte, Cherry, Dawes, Sheridan, and Sioux counties.

Salvation Army of Norfolk - \$20,000

The Norfolk location of the international outreach program, Salvation Army, provides a daily food pantry and soup kitchen services for area residents. In addition, the center provides food for backpack programs and financial support for households in need.

Settlement Details:

The settlement resulted from a lawsuit filed in December 2010 by Attorney General Bruning and 38 other Attorneys General. The suit alleged that Dannon made unlawful claims in advertising, marketing, packaging, and selling Activia yogurts and DanActive dairy drinks.

As a result of the filing, Dannon paid a total of \$21 million dollars to the states. Additionally, the company is now prohibited from making certain unlawful claims related to diseases and from making claims about the covered products' benefits without adequate substantiation.

Although Dannon, Inc. admitted no wrongdoing, the company cooperated with the multi-state investigation.

Recipient amounts were determined by various factors, including: reach of operation, population served and prior-year assistance requests.